# THE STRUCTURE OF MENTAL DISORDER*

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The present trend towards an atheoretical statistical method of psychiatric classification has prompted many psychiatrists to conceive of "mental disorder", or for that matter any other psychopathological designation, as an indexical cluster of properties and events more than a distinct psychological impairment. By employing different combinations of inclusion and exclusion criteria, the current American Psychiatric Association's scheme (called DSM-III) hopes to avoid the over-selectivity of more metaphysical systems and thereby provide the clinician with a flexible means of dealing with a wide diversity of cases. In the hope of redirecting future inquiry, the paper will argue: (1) that this recent trend might appear to be clinically beneficial, but in point of fact it is riddled by unsound theoretical conclusions which leave the field without a deeply reaching base for understanding and treating mental disorder, and (2) that, *a fortiori*, "mental disorder" is best conceived as not a cluster of properties and events, nor a metaphorical reaction to a breakdown in social interpersonal relations, but as a deeply laid condition characterized by the absence of an imaginally integrated system.

No doubt much to the dismay of the courts, recent efforts in psychiatry appear to be taking a nominalist turn. The present trend towards an atheoretical statistical method of psychiatric classification, coupled with exponential advancements in physiological and neurochemical research, has raised serious doubt as to whether the traditional concept of "mental disorder", or for that matter any other psychopathological designation, can truly possess either existential or practical import. The fact that no single standard has been efficient enough to distinguish psychotic states from borderline cases, either cross-culturally or intra-culturally, has prompted many psychiatrists to conceive of "mental disorder" as a general term extrapolated from observed consequences; more specifically as an indexical cluster of properties and events rather than a distinct psychological impairment. (For a general discussion see Blashfield and Draguns 1976 and Spitzer *et. al.* 1975). Philosophically, in a Quine-Sellar's sense, such a posture does not offer a reductionalist analysis; clinically, however, it has impelled psychiatrists to look to non-psychological alternatives, e.g., electric shock treatment and pharmocotherapy, as a more effective form of treatment than communicating with the patient.

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In light of the shortcomings of DSM-II, it is not surprising that such a classificatory scheme has been well received.[1] Psychiatric taxonomies in the past have frequently been more theoretical than practical, often sacrificing clinical considerations for the comfort of a tightly fitting nosology. By employing different combinations of inclusion and exclusion criteria, the present APA scheme (called by its cognomen DSM-III) hopes to avoid the overselectivity of more metaphysical systems and thereby provide the clinician with a flexible means of dealing with a wide diversity of cases—a means that can register and treat the symptoms of mental disorder like the symptoms of any other medical disorder without getting mired in heavy academic thought as to the nature of reality or man. Even to those less impressed with the tenor of this approach, especially those outside the medical field, the apparent success of this emended health-disease model in handling the homogeneity among disorders is a factor which has been difficult to ignore. If there is a concern among the unconvinced, it seems to lie with whether there is more to human operations, and consequently more to mental disorder, than can be ascertained by a system of classification that is primarily geared towards external description and a passive view of the patient as an afflicted victim.

In a recent article the philosopher Eli Hirsch has convincingly argued that external reports or sense data descriptions cannot account for the depth and extensiveness of human behavior; that the organism possesses an inborn sense of bodily unity which automatically provides "a general epistemic orientation towards the world" and a structure for regulating human actions (Hirsch 1978, p. 491). Somewhat less organic, Alvin Goldman has similarly contended that traditional epistemological principles cannot adequately determine the status of intellectual performances; that mental activities can only be judged in reference to the "power and limits of the human cognitive system" (Goldman 1978, p. 510). Certainly both of these accounts give some justification to the concern that a system of psychiatric classification based on external descriptions might undiscerningly disregard the dynamics of inner states. Although neither Hirsch nor Goldman discuss with any penetration the nature of this elusive inner world (laying aside mind-body discussion in favor of more epistemological considerations), they appear to be in concert on the point that any comprehensive assessment of mental activity

[1]DSM-II refers to *The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* issued by the American Psychiatric Association in 1968. The criteria established by DSM-II for classifying disorders have proven neither reliable nor practical. To save the paradigm, in a Kuhnian sense, the APA has recently unfolded what has been touted as a non-standardized DSM-III with only highly recommended criteria (criteria which the clinician can discreetly use or discard as he sees fit); see (Spitzer *et. al.* 1980).

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must seriously consider the structural aspects of cognitive operations.

Philosophers have long recognized the importance of dealing with mental disorder, especially where issues of competency and responsibility were involved. But philosophers in general—perhaps because the irreducible disparity between mind-body has placed considerable limitations on what can be known, or perhaps because they have simply come to believe that only psychologists and psychiatrists have the license or equipment to excavate such grounds—have been more concerned about establishing a workable definition of mental disorder than in theorizing about the nature of the phenomenon itself. Although these expositions have been valuable in countering those who would resolve the problem of mental disorder by reducing the concept to a pseudo scientific label or social myth,[2] this intense concern for the subtleties of the English language has often seemed meaningless and scholastic to the person in the clinical trenches who is constantly beleaguered by troubled souls and who anxiously seeks a sound framework to identify the nature of these ailments. Certainly in comparison to some of the exciting theoretical work done in other areas of mind, recent efforts on mental disorder have seemed quite meager and fainthearted.

By combining philosophical thought with psychiatric and psychological studies, an avenue of investigation and exchange that has often been ignored (if not deliberately avoided) by the practitioners of these pursuits, I would like to attempt what philosophers in general have refrained from doing (no doubt less foolishly) and that is to provide, without pretense of final solution, a general theory of mental disorder. More specifically, in the hope of redirecting future inquiry this paper will argue: (1) that the recent trend towards multivariate statistical methods of psychiatric classification—what has been regarded by DSM-III collaborators as "a major investment of the profession" (Spitzer *et. al.* 1980, p. 162)—might appear to be clinically beneficial, but in point of fact it is riddled by unsound theoretical conclusions which leave the field without a deeply reaching base for understanding and treating mental disorder, and (2), that, *a fortiori*, "mental disorder" is best conceived as not a cluster of properties and events, nor a metaphorical reaction to a breakdown in social interpersonal relations, but a deeply laid condition characterized by the absence of an imaginally integrated system. Such an account, to be sure, hinges upon a successful explanation of imagery. Although it will be difficult to give an adequate account of so troublesome a topic within the

[2]In his controversial work *The Myth of Mental Illness* (1961), Thomas Szasz has maintained that categories like "psychopathology", "mental disorder", and "mental illness" are not designations of disturbed thought but simply mythological constructs which emerge from a breakdown in social interpersonal relations.

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context of a discussion on mental disorder, a determined effort will be made to show at least that image systems, more than language systems, are the best analogue of inner representation and therefore the best indicator of integrated and disintegrated thought.

It is worth mentioning, if only to ward off unfavorable comments, that "mental disorder" does not imply an irreducible non-physical disorder. Although condemned to an independent ontological status by its use in the vernacular, it is evident that "mental" refers to a complex psychological process that takes place within a physical self and not to an unextended thinking entity. Although not every instance of mental states and processes is an instance of the same physical states and processes, i.e., that no nomological bond or bridge law seems to stand between psychological and physiological types, physical explanation is certainly compatible with this account. Explanations may vary, but enough empirical evidence has been uncovered to leave little doubt that integrated physical structures (e.g., the reticular formation, central nervous system etc.) in some way stimulate and limit the structure of mental sets. As mental factors can affect physical disorders (without leading necessarily to mental disorder), so physical factors, along with hereditary and environmental factors, can help bring about a condition of disordered thought.

**I. Imagery and Mental Disorders.** Because of a similar social and biological heritage, most of us, for the most part, see and think in common. As coherentists and linguistic rationalists alike have not been reticent in reminding us, the mind rarely attends purely to external states of affairs. A good deal of our perception and thought are products of cognitive fields or systems which we well-nigh mechanically engage. What these frameworks provide is a veritable stadium in which our innermost cerebrations perform. Although much of the stadium, to push the metaphor, has already been laid out, I take it to be an empirical fact that the individual contributes to the design and composition of his own mental set; that is, that he sorts out the multiplicity of stimuli that besets him and generally strives to order his environment into a coherent figural unit. Like paradigm formation is to Kuhn an adaptive mode necessary for species survival, such schema are the way individuals apparently fashion for themselves, although not necessarily consciously, a world of utility and meaning.

What sort of properties images have and how imagery relates to cognitive operations have become, after a long period of disinterest, issues of considerable discussion and controversy. Because of its similarity to what some believe is the unmediated openness of perception, some empirical philosophers of mind have identified imagery with either pictorial properties or mental pictures thus denying it a thinking and semantical

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function. (For example, see Hannay 1971, Hannay 1973 and Perkins 1970). Although eidetic and after-images, in virtue of their affinity to perception and dependence upon natural stimuli, come closer to picturing than, say, hallucinatory images, it will be argued that this iconic model of imagery is deficient in several respects: (1) it deals primarily with visual images, thereby disregarding not only auditory, gustatory and motoric images, but images less beholding to external stimulation, e.g., images of place, composition and negation, (2) it confuses images which are more surface and concrete entities, with imagery—a mediating process that regulates images and brings them into a wider semantical field; and (3) it ignores the personal and constructive nature of imagery (that which sets it apart from the more propositional and consensual character of perception), *viz.*, the fact that individual purpose can alter the nature of things, or the relation of things with other things, through image formations.

One of the ironies of this revived interest in imagery has been that the position most credited with its reinstatement, particularly in opposition to a picture theory of representation, has become the one least concerned with its character. Even more than traditional empiricism, information-processing theories have left the nature of imagery unspecified (if not unnecessary) by making it a token of a computational system of description. Interestingly, although this position, like quantum theory, has attempted to steer clear of the philosophical pitfalls of both dualism and radical reductionism by focusing on the interconnecting bond and ongoing processes that unite parts to one another, it has been hard put at times avoiding either one of these snares; that is, (1) that even though the ''mental'' and the ''physical'' have been relegated to surface manifestations of deeper structures, the position still maintains the dualism of input and output devices; and (2) by placing systems as diverse as human beings and calculating machines under the same ''hardware'' label, the stigma of excessive reductionism has not altogether been removed (the monadicity of qualia does not seem to be identical with homeostasis or feedback stabilization). It is not within the purview of this paper to evaluate the information-processing model but only to suggest that in its enthusiasm to show how rationality is structured and how information can be represented it completely disdains, like the picture theory it attempts to refute, the personal and cognitive nature of imagery. Indeed when the machines are turned off and the smoke clears there is less distance between these positions than might first appear. The fact is that the first stage of processing still remains a sensory register, and even though images are no longer simplified depictions, they do persist iconically as a representation of perceived data. Hume's thesis has not been unseated: there is little distinction between perception and our image of perception

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other than the superior "force and vivacity" of the former.

From what can be gathered from the current volume of research, to regard images epiphenomenally as either a physical replication of sensory experience or a print-out of a computational system of description seems to grossly minimize and misrepresent its place within the cognitive system. Works by Paivio (1969 and 1971) and Rosch (1975 and 1977) have persuasively shown that images are not isolated, noncognitive entities but semi-concretized products (what some psychologists have called "prototypical exemplars") of a deeper and more abstract substrata which in itself is not distinguished by such images. What this medium is, and what about it that makes it a medium of thought, is a major challenge to those who seek to understand the dynamics of mind. For reasons which subsequently will be explained, this substrata comes off better as not a central processing unit of computational propositions, but as a more idiographic system of image-types. In a Kantian sense, imagery is the interstice that forms the nature of thought—a cognitive-affective map of how objects and events, even non-existent objects and events, relate to each other in an arrangement of being. It will be one of the major contentions of this paper that imagery, as such, provides the key to understanding the order of mental sets and the figural disruption which can lead to its disorder.

Some psychiatrists have associated mind with language (i.e., language in the ordinary denotation of the term) to the point that disturbances of communication have been viewed as the most complete expression of disordered thought. Ruesch (1957), for instance, has continually maintained that the transmission of unintelligible statements and the constant misinterpretation of messages received are the most reliable signs of schizophrenia. Although it is true that the ratings for overall deviant verbalization among disordered patients have been relatively high, recent studies have clearly found that disturbances of communication are neither unique to nor necessarily indicative of mental disorder. (See Harrow and Prosen 1979 and Siegel *et. al.* 1976). Apparently, a patient can be greatly disoriented and still be able to converse with doctors and friends (say by parroting stereotypic statements), or, with equal possibility, he can transgress the norms of proper word usage and be quite perfectly disposed. Unless evidence to the contrary can be found, and it is a formidable issue as to what would constitute this, no structural isomorphism appears to exist between thinking and language (or between imagery and language). Language may clue us in as to the status of internal states, but the representations of non-verbal thinking are less differentiated and more global than the built in categories and subclasses of one's native tongue (nonverbal representation seems to be dominated by right hemisphere processes). Grammatical sentences of personal form, i.e., token reflexive expressions like "I got my head together", can certainly be stated without

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implying at a deeper level of articulation either intentional design or structured identity. (For a good account of integrated identity read Forisha 1979).

The current movement by some theorists (*cf.* Chomsky 1965, Fodor 1975 and Pylyshyn 1973) to sustain this unified treatment between language and mind by moving language operations inside has generated considerable discussion, but little assent. Having cognition mediated by a core representation system of propositions not available to consciousness has raised serious questions as to what, if anything, do proposition types represent and whether in fact the ''language of thought'' can be truly propositional. Space does not permit a detailed examination of these questions but suffice to say that by reducing cognition to a single conceptual framework of sentence types (and imagery to a token of that formation), this ''inner-language'' model diverts attention away from psychological structures leaving scant room for the personal and constructive nature of human thought. Though some have replied that a rule-governed system does not preclude novelty and new construction (Katz 1979), it is apparent that, since both mechanistic and organismic versions of this theory hold these metatheoretical underpinnings to be shared representations (and not propositions which the subject has an attitude towards, or can alter or forget), ''novelty'' and ''construction'' are being used here in rather unusual and extended senses. For the purpose at hand what is important is that these inner language theories withdraw rationality from the subject thus ruling out any individualistic account of mental disorder; that is to say, since the ''language of thought'' cannot be disordered (otherwise the whole epistemic system breaks down and species survival is imperiled) any pathology displayed by a member must be regarded as more a matter of incidental occurrence (e.g., loss of access to long term memory) rather than a breakdown in cognitive competence or structure. The fact that Chomsky's description of grammar is not disproven when experimental conditions fall short of substantiating it, or that idiosyncratic images to Fodor have little affect on the role they play within the cognitive system, seems to suggest that to inner language theorists, individual performance, no matter how bizarre, does not actually reflect the structural competence which determines all behavior. A person might be disposed towards acting deranged because it is in his interest to do so, but not because he hasn't the capacity to do otherwise.

Considering the extensive work done in cognitive psychology on processes that mediate the attainment of skills, and on the differences between communication and thought, it might prove imprudent to dismiss this notion of a ''language of thought''. Although Chomsky's discrete formalism has been toned down by the increased awareness that social factors do influence the acquisition of a system of representation, i.e.,

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that the individual is affected by others in attempting to fulfill certain needs, the fact still remains that a referent can be so salient for non-linguistic reasons that it can have representational status prior to any language input. There is ample precedent for the legitimacy of the notion that some type of conceptual and semantical structure guides the behavioral repertoire of the organism and continually bears upon how one speaks and thinks in words. What is called for is not an outright rejection of a ''language of thought'' but a reconsideration of what such a concept entails. The apparent difficulties with both pictorial and propositional theories of representation would seem to suggest that no familiar analogue amongst external vehicles of representation is appropriate for ''limning'' the structure of thought and that any acceptable theory of representation may have to look internally rather than externally to find a suitable representative of representation. Since to represent representation is as confusing as having a mental image of a mental image of something (and in a sense nullifies itself), a ''language of thought'' becomes plausible not as a language of strict reference or denotation, i.e., a transcriber of input information, but as a ''fuzzy'' medium of symbolic encoding centered upon the particular position of the subject. This is not to discount supra-individualistic factors like genetic inheritance, instincts or memories of earlier brains (certainly a cognitive structure without progenitive success cannot persist). But since the individual has the ability to alter to some degree these intrinsic elements, as well as the ability to discard certain aspects that he finds threatening or destructive, such elementary operations might best be regarded as a schema which has restrictive powers but not one which represents anything as yet.

A reconstructive or constructive hypothesis seems more viable here; that is, a ''language of thought'' would be better regarded as not a language or language-type at all, but as an individual specific re-presentation of salient experiences (e.g., perceptual, emotional and fanciful images) through a medium capable of inspecting, preserving, transforming and integrating these experiences into a coherent semantical field (a field which when organized leaves the individual with an apperception of total phenomena). Although philosophers have been strongly opposed to imagery as the chief vehicle of mental representation, from what is known about internal representation—that it is prototypical and violates the all or nothing categories of classical logic; that it is connected with human emotions and expectations; and that it analogically relates objects and experiences from the past to objects and experiences in the present—an imaginal mode of representation would seem a better analogue of the dynamics of inner thought than any proffered pictorial or linguistic idealization.

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Though empirically minded epistemologists have been generally critical of any rationalist notion of a "language of thought" because it cannot be known through its effects, they apparently have not been so adamant in their censure as to abandon the idea of thought as language. Donald Davidson's position (1976) that even though we cannot understand what a person says until we understand his beliefs we should still assume that his beliefs are consistent with what he says, and Stephen Stich's notion (1978) that only belief states and not subdoxastic states possess the necessary awareness and assertion to be inferentially integrated, clearly test cognitive integration in a linguistic rather than non-linguistic format; that is, in reference to the structure of sentences rather than the structure of experience. That language as we know it can affect thought processes by ordering and arranging objects in terms of common features so that general statements can be made is, I take it, an uncontroversial point. What is at issue here is whether language, natural or neutral, provides an incomparable window into the human mind and therefore is the best indicator of integrated or disintegrated thought. Admittedly epistemologists of any persuasion, if they are not to reduce knowing to a particular psychological state and protect self-justification, must deal with the statements actually made, i.e., the public element in correct inference, rather than events in the individual's head. But traditionally epistemologists have only stressed the end product, or conclusion, of what appears to be a nonlinear, multidimensional thought process, not the total process itself.[3] And as a mathematically correct answer can be stated in a Gettier-like manner without indicating either an understanding of or compliance to correct inferential procedures, so it is possible that a sensible series of verbal responses can be made without implying structured thought. To judge integrated thought from the reasons one tells us about is to equate cognitive operations with consciousness and the reasons for which one believes something with conscious reasons. Such a monolithic, ahistorical perspective minimizes the complexity of a conscious process that rages from more to less accessibility and tends to ignore that a person's reasons for believing some-

Goldman would no doubt regard both Davidson and Stich's concept of belief as typical of "coarse-grained" epistemology; (1978, p. 511). Although Goldman's naturalized epistemology tends to disregard that how we come to believe in something is not identical with the soundness of the belief, there is still merit to Goldman's notion that a greater understanding of human capacities, and the processes that occur when reasoning takes place, might lead to a clearer picture of the act of believing and what constitutes having a belief. Traditionally epistemologists have been unusually uninquiring about the nature and workings of the structure which underlies belief formations, but if it is possible that a person can make a justified statement and still be mentally disordered then perhaps the semantical content of non-linguistic formations, or the inferential connection between non-linguistic states and occurrent beliefs, might be *terra incognita* for future epistemologists.

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thing are a result of generalities arrived at on the basis of past experience—generalities which may or may not be cognitively integrated.[4]

From our standpoint, the public and rule based character of language separates us from a privileged set of abstract and emotionally charged representations which, because of their closeness to the psychological and physical needs of the subject, reflect a deeper conceptualization of the world than epistemologists have been willing to recognize. If epistemologists want to avoid a psychological turn to standardize and to objectify the pattern of discourse then they cannot expect to stand in the streets of psychology and direct traffic. Language systems may be the best way to obtain a consensual validation of belief or the objective order of knowing, but language systems or language-type systems cannot account for all the many visages of inference. To put it another way, language systems do not come to terms, so to speak, with the emotional, conative and historical individual—the subject's order of being. Only figurative expressions, i.e., image-like language that violates contextually fixed signs, appear to be privy to the inner workings of mental sets and they must cling to their language base lest they drift into a current of nonsense.[5]

Stich is quite right to conclude that the inferential relations between subdoxastic states are not standard cases of inference. In a series of experiments, Shepard (1971 and 1975; for a general overview read 1978) has quite clearly shown that the inferential relation between images appears to be more spatially than sequentially oriented; to wit, more like a synchronic relation between parts than a transition between sentences. Stich's assumption, however, that subdoxastic inferences cannot be integrated, that they are a "heterogeneous collection of psychological states" (1978, p. 499), is less well founded and simply reflects the linguistic *parti pris*, of which inner-language theorists are likewise culpable, which holds non-language states to be intrinsically isolated entities incapable of possessing an abstract or semantical function. Apparently Stich is fearful that an admission of inferential integration at a subdoxastic level

[4]Even though there is a movement in contemporary epistemology away from foundationalist theories because of their inability to justify their own epistemic position, the analysis of knowledge in terms of justified true belief may be said to be standard in the sense that most philosophers today would accept this measure. To preserve the paradigm of knowledge as objective, that is, as not identical with a state or condition of the subject, the epistemological community, in a Kuhnian sense, has generally opposed any effort that would: (1) define knowledge without a belief condition (Plato, Prichard, Vendler); (2) deny the possibility of knowledge by denying the possibility of justified belief (extreme skepticism); (3) question whether justified true belief entails knowledge (Gettier examples); and (4) extend belief and possibly knowledge to states where there is no access to what is believed (Harman, Fodor).

[5]Sarbin and Juhasz (1978) have observed that figurative expressions facilitate the translation from the imagistic mode to linguistic and social modes even though any translation of the imagistic mode must always be "imperfect".

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would entail an identity or inner-language theory of belief and thus the abolition of the traditional belief-subdoxastic distinction (or what comes to the same thing, the extending of belief to states whose content cannot be reported). If our account of imagery has any modicum of merit, then Stich's fears are exaggerated on two counts. Firstly, inferential organization can take place at a non-linguistic level without calling for an identity or inner-language theory of belief; secondly, if having a concept, like a conscious act, is one of degree, and if even an imperfect grasp of a concept requires some understanding and acceptance, then certain non-linguistic states may very well qualify for a belief formation (although not an occurrent belief that directly asserts that such and such is or is not the case).[6] Russell (1919) well recognized the fact that imagery arranges things in a certain order and that this ability to put things into shape qualifies it for a kind of propositional act.

As I understand Stich, Rorty, Sellars and the like, there is no great objection to enlarging the extension of belief to non-linguistic states as long as some new terms are available to denote the class of states which are linguistically related. Such a concession naturally camouflages the real intent here which is simply to remind us that language states must have priority over non-language states in the epistemological enterprise. A concession, however, is logically required to grant something. And to acknowledge that non-linguistic states can be belief states of sorts is really to concede, no matter how unexpressed, that non-linguistic states are a far cry from the impoverished and detached phenomenon that those who would make language the analogue of thought would have us believe. Research relating to associative learning, narrative structures and memory retention has well demonstrated that image systems provide a conceptual core of abstract entities that are inferentially connected with a framework of belief and apparently, because of their prototypical and global nature, can affect attention to things even more so than language. (For example, see Brooks 1968, Bugelski 1970, Levin and Divine-Hawkins 1974, and Guilford 1967). The force of such image systems may be so overpower-

[6]To maintain that it is "intuitively obvious" that subdoxastic states are not belief formations in that they do not possess the awareness and assertion necessary for belief (Stich), or that belief is essentially what holds true of a sentence (Davidson), clearly begs the question as to why we should be saddled with so limited a concept of belief. Outside of the fact that having a belief does not always dispose the believer to assert or manifest his belief, or that non-language-using creatures can be said to have beliefs in the sense that they can register information about their environment (see Armstrong 1973), such arguments disregard that at most times we are not accessible to a kind of information that it is reasonable for us to believe in even though it is not being believed in at the time. Knowledge implies belief but not to the extent that one can go to bat for what it is one believes. The fact that there is no such thing as a justified belief that is non-propositional does not warrant the conclusion that there is no such thing as a non-propositional state that can be a belief formation.

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ing at times, especially in intense need states, as to thwart any translation into word meaning. Sometimes this incapacity to paraphrase is accompanied either by the exhilarating feeling that one is truly free from social constraints and natural forces or by the bewildering sensation that one's thoughts are no longer under control (Horowitz 1967 has noticed that when image systems overpower lexical systems a sense of "strangeness" follows).[7] While the liberating feeling of the former is more characteristic of a transcendental encounter, the anomie of the latter strongly smacks of pathological thought.

An aversion to the world as extant, attended by a sense of powerlessness and confusion, is a common symptom of mentally disordered patients. The tendency on the part of certain factions to view psychopathology as episodic (inner-language theorists), or as continuous with observed properties and events (DSM-III), evidently overlooks the possibility that this sense of disunity might be part and parcel of a more complex disarrangement. Although varying types of disorders no doubt exist (of varying depth, duration and debility), research into cognitive operations has provided considerable demonstration that mental disorders, in comparison to less cognitively deteriorating behavioral, psychophysiological or conscious disorders (e.g., the disunity of the akratic, commissurotomy and self deceptive person), are not simply syncretic points on a temporal scale but cross-situational conditions of compositional impairment (conditions which are particularly characterized by the disintegration of ego boundaries and the inability to impose systematic images on information received). (See Kernberg 1975 and Witkin 1965).

The point made by some psychiatrists (*cf.*, Forrest 1976), especially those preoccupied with human authenticity and an accompanying arrogance towards what is normal, that the mental incongruity of the so-labeled "disordered" person is little different from the divergent thinking of the creative artist—in that both dislodge themselves from habitual associations to present original universes of meaning—clearly and uncritically confuses divergent with original thinking. Indeed, as Plato well knew, there is a family resemblance between the artist and the "madman", for both appear to explore their autonomous spheres with little regard for public precepts or extramental reality. But as analogy does not entail homology, such similarity by no means implies kinship. The acceptability of aberrant perspective is contingent upon revealing more through distortion, not less. The aspects or quasi-perceptual perspectives of an artist can usually be seen as a new synthesis—a look beyond our world to other

[7]In a later work, Horowitz additionally notes that in certain stressful situations the intensity of the imagery may become so great that no perceptual "nidus" is needed to envisage things that aren't there; see (Horowitz 1975, p. 791).

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worlds and perhaps greater possible understanding. The imagery of a mentally disordered person is seemingly to a world beyond possibility; namely, a world so schematically entropic that no system of relationship can be discerned. Such a world—a world without a structure of interacting individuals and things; a world characterized by unbidden images—would seem a far cry from the penetrating human insights and shared experiences usually afforded by artistic presentations.[8] Like a black hole, it is a desolate world (if "world" it could be called) whose inner gravitational pull is so great that only faint elements of light escape.

Mental disorder is a state under two flags: dictatorship and anarchy. Dictatorship in the sense that tyrannical images seem to dominate the person's life to the point that he/she is incapable of affecting it; anarchy in that the person's world is segmentalized to such an extent that no governing paradigm or integrated "I-ness" can be sustained (a condition of mental disorder does not usually possess the properties of reflexivity, symmetry and transitivity usually considered necessary for wholesome identity; that is, for differentiating oneself from others so as to objectify one's own experience). An alternative logic of imagery, rather than a predicate logic of objects and quantifiers, may be the most accurate way of both describing and identifying mental disorder. The fact that the individual being is in one sense a closed system, and like any other system of inherent organization basically resistant to linear description, would seem to make the relation of image to image to whole more disclosing of mental status than the decentered, rule-based logic of a propositional calculus.[9] A mentally disordered person has no imaginal scheme of self,

[8]The tendency to confuse the artist with the disordered person often stems from the inability to distinguish imagination from imagery, or an "imagined" world from an "image-world". An "imagined" world has an "as if" property about it; one continually modifies his consciousness by jumping from perception to imagination and back in search of new form. It is a world greatly dependent upon both imagery and language: imagery for the cognitively and emotionally charged representation which serves as the raw material for imagination's more dramatized version; language for evoking those images which have been consigned to privy.

An "image-world" is far less speculative and changing than its "imagined" counterpart—there is little aspect viewing. The image-world of a disordered person is usually characterized by a preponderance of image-representation which during stressful situations tends to unwillfully appear. Whereas we cannot "imagine" an impossible world, in that poetic assent and its dependence upon prevailing actuals makes an "imagined" world incapable of being unimaginable or misleading, we can "image" an impossible world—one that is not in possession of an integrated system of reference or representation; see (Arlow 1969, pp. 21–25.

[9]It is self-evident that if we are to profit from any observations made on non-linguistic representation, and there seems to be adequate externalization of inner thought to support such investigations, we will have to express these findings in a linguistic mode. Since the global, pre-attentive representations of imagery are less differentiated than the propositions of language and perception (and therefore more difficult to recover and articulate), the Quinean-type question rears its head as to how a translation of image formations can be

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others and place that is a logically possible world in itself. Unlike the master chess player who has an internal representation of position and look-ahead goals (Eisenstadt and Kareev 1979), the disordered individual has no sense of where on the board he is and no game plan as to where he is going. He lacks an organized hierarchy—a global perspective.

To have an image-world, unlike having an "imagined" world, does not ensure its possibility; there are limits to what is imaginally possible. Where the artist's world is a possible world ("possible" in the sense of being feasibly combined rather than compatible with a set of true propositions, commonly held beliefs or causal laws), the world of mental disorder is a "world" without possible extent, i.e., the events and entities referred to do not hang together in a way that is coordinated. This does not mean that a person has no access to such a world (although like bridges that have been tactically destroyed, disintegrated imagery does not facilitate the recovery of previously occupied territory); nor is this to say that even though long-term schema are difficult to change that image formations are immutable historical archives. Although image-worlds do not transform automatically with biological development (i.e., *contra* Piagetians, ontogenetic shifts do not necessarily entail structural reorganization), a disordered person can change his template by acquiring or constructing a new symbolic framework: his entropy, unlike physical entropy, is not irreversible (one-third of all schizophrenics recover for keeps). It is clear, however, that a formation of a world that cannot logically or semantically be extended—that does not correspond to what some consider to be a non-*a priori*, universal sense of cohesiveness and

possible. It is obvious that an effective logic, or hermeneutics, of image systems would have to compromise with the vagueness of the figure, i.e., the coalescing of multiple meaning into a single image, to solve problems too complex for a calculus of well-formed formulae and tightly bounded categories. Besides a metalanguage to set up rules of interpretation and correctness for non-standard operations, such a model would require a non-bivalent logic where truth value gaps would be allowed (similiar to assessing the harmony, rather than the melody, of a musical piece). By "structured" interviews (see Kernberg 1975), kindled by the warmth of dyadic communication, it is believed that the inferential pattern of image formations can be assessed and that this will provide the clinician with a better gauge of mental disorder than ordinary predicate logic.

It should be clear that we are not restricted to, nor should we restrict ourselves to, phenomenological reports. Hypnosis, imaginal-perceptual testing (e.g., Object Sorting Test, Rorschach Test, Guilford-Zimmerman Spatial Orientation Test, etc.), symptomatic and behavioral observations, and even medical reports should be used to acquire a cross-level profile of the patient. A caveat may be in order here. Since memory in this report is tied to the dynamic representation of image systems, it is unlikely that retrieved memory will be identical to the patient's original experience. If the theory of prototypes or average-case representation is correct, then we do not remember our nuclear experiences in their pristine form—we remember them only as part of a wider field of meaning. Psychiatrists, therefore, might best be advised not to give too high a confidence to the substance of what is being recalled but to attend to instead the pattern rather than the content of internal representation.

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continuity—is not indicative of a behavioral or emotional dysfunction but points instead to a more involved condition of mental impairment.[10]

**II. Mental Disorder and DSM-III.** A structural account of mental disorder is not a way of packaging heterogeneous notions or a trivial *excursus* that is true in virtue of its form—it is an inductive explanation that offers a more enriched and accurate description of a tragic human condition. This is not to say that such an account can whittle away accidental features to finally lay bare the essence of mental disorder. Not only are essences ambiguous properties in that there are various ways of expressing essentiality, but the composition of mental processes, like that of quarks, might be so confined to the interior of bodies that no one description or set of criteria can ever hope to distill its inherent nature. Indeed, as the Rosenhan (1973) study has dramatically shown, any diagnosis of mental disorder based on any fixed set of criteria is theoretically overexclusive and clinically "insane".[11]

To reject a single descriptive view of mental disorder, however, is not to imply that one must lean towards a cluster account or that in pain of infinite regress no structural explanation is possible. As there is more to human intentionality than simply responding to changing stimuli, there is more to mental disorder than what falls under the canopy of functional disabilities (homosexuals disturbed by their inability to function heterosexually do not qualify in this account, as they do in DSM-III, as mentally disordered). To limit analysis to functional impairments, such as the incongruity of verbal responses, might be to skim the surface of a deeply reaching concern. The conclusion of Antony Duff that the belief system

[10]The fact that we have a well-ingrained, innate awareness of unity by which to judge the world is Hirsch's point (though it is doubtful whether Hirsch would subscribe to the thesis that mental disorder is possible). Apparently, Hirsch assumes that biological unity, i.e., "qualitative" and "spatiotemporal" continuity, logically entails steady state equilibrium and the natural unity of thought. More ethically posed, Roland Puccetti (1977) makes the same point; that "knowing who" you are in the past can be discontinuous, "knowing that" you are is a permanent awareness which makes ones right as a "person" inviolable. This paper has suggested that an imaginal pattern of self transcends both bodily awareness and the conscious unity of the self. Moreover, that though one's right as a "person" is never violable, in that any patient is entitled to proper care, supervision and sustenance, there are times when an excessive strain upon a mental set can bring about a condition of self-disruption. Such a position is not without support. A recent study by Chapman, Chapman and Rawlin (1978) has found that body-image aberration among schizophrenics is part of a broader scheme of imagined distortion.

[11]No study has revealed more strikingly the difficulty and confusion with psychiatric diagnoses than the Rosenhan study. Although there has been considerable debate as to who or what is to blame (unaccomplished clinicians who overpathologize or an outdated classificatory system), the fact remains that eight pseudo-patients who did not have, or never did have, a pathological condition were diagnosed as psychotic in twelve different hospitals.

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of the psychopath is not compatible with "shared metaphysical and ethical tradition" might be correct as it stands, but it fails to consider the internal assemblage of the patient (1977, p. 193). As Putnam (1975) has noted in a classical response to Malcolm, outer criteria are not always good indicators of inner states; and failing to comply to cultural or ethical standards might indeed further incomprehension and social disapproval, but it does not logically entail, all things considered, disordered thought (as meeting ordinary behavioral expectations does not eliminate the possibility of structural disturbance).

The difficulty with the current APA scheme is the same as were the difficulties with Kraepelinean psychiatry—by attempting to assign confirmation to psychopathological designations on the basis of symptoms and etiology it has trouble in explaining why populations group together and in determining what the next case will be. This does not imply, to restate an earlier point, that cluster accounts are reductive (although admittedly it is difficult to see how an atheoretical approach like DSM-III can handle reference existentially when there are no higher grounds available to explain indexical elements or to decide between incompatible true versions). Nor is this to say that cluster accounts have no role to play in determining reference conditions. In the same way that a theory of gravity has to reckon with the actions of atoms and elementary particles, any account of mental disorder must be compatible in some way or form with a cluster of traits (e.g., a high degree of relationship holds between the symptoms of delusional intrusion and acute schizophrenia). What is needed is a procedure for both describing and identifying mental disorder that does not exhaust analysis; that is capable of reaching beyond documenting empirical co-occurences and predicted consequences to provide a general explanation of the character of the actions observed. The current emphasis on multivariate statistical methods of classification may seem very accomodating in that they allow the psychiatrist to adjust his/her policies and standards to fit the singularity of clinical cases, but by concentrating on the practical task of correcting observed dysfunction such an approach lacks the theoretical basis for deciding whether the cases under treatment bear any resemblance to each other or not. Like most models of infinite conjunction and disjunction, although the infirmity is not irremediable, DSM-III does not possess a deep enough philosophy of being or knowledge that can lead psychiatry to a better understanding of mental disorder or to a better treatment of the patient (a classificatory system that is incapable of defining the underlying form representative of future instances cannot lead to diagnoses based on correct inference). Indeed, a twenty-two year follow-up study of acute schizophrenia (Knight *et. al.* 1979) has revealed that recent diagnostic criteria for schizophrenia are inadequate precisely because they focus almost exclusively on man-

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ifestations of disorder rather than on the deeper and longer existing problems of an intrapsychic structure.

The human self is more than a pastiche of analytically discernible occurences or functionally individuated states (although, unlike Gestaltists, such analysis is not inconsonant with this account). The oft-quoted conclusion that the cognitive unity of the person is questionable considering the duality of the cerebral cortex, *viz.*, left and right hemisphere split, does not appear, now that the evidence is tallied, to be well-grounded. Findings on the transfer of visual habits and the non-verbal cross-cueing of information, as well as contradictory data on brain lesions, would seem to indicate that there is a free exchange between hemispheres and that cognitively this asymmetry is more functional than structural in nature. In a manner peculiar to himself the individual, for the most part, is a total system of thought. A condition of imaginal disruption violates this cognitive symmetry; that is, a mentally disordered person segmentalizes his image-world to the point that no converging pattern or integrated system of reference can be sustained. To dismiss this claim on the grounds that cognitive integration or disintegration can only be judged from a linguistic venue not only overlooks a privileged set of abstract and emotionally charged representations which constitute a deeper conceptualization of the world, but it limits mental disorder to manifested thought disorders and thereby disregards the possibility of a more comprehensive impairment. Under highly emotional and painful life experiences, imagery does not manifest disorder; it plays a causal role in bringing about a disordered system itself.

**III. Conclusion.** The current efforts by philosophers to establish a workable definition of "mental disorder" is not a nugatory contribution; a careful elucidation of any concept helps qualify its meaning and delineate its usage. But, as philosophers are well aware, language is a factory that can disassemble as well as combine and to restrict ourselves to pointing out things of the kind named, without attempting to theorize as to what it is to be of that kind, can leave us abandoned with no reality left beyond language.

We have suggested that "mental disorder" might best be conceived as referring to the absence of an imaginally integrated system. To some this description may seem too broad to be beneficial—no doubt they have a point, for such a description does little to help the practicing psychiatrist identify difficult borderline cases. But the inapplicability of a description, like the indeterminacy of a description, does not necessarily imply the lack of reference. And the purpose of this report was not to design a calculus for identifying the varying types of mental disorder (a job more eminently suitable for future psycho-psychiatric research), but to provide

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some insight into the nature of mental disorder, and the theoretical issues involved, so as to redirect future inquiry. Regardless of what calculi are employed, although some will be more effective than others, psychiatry is presently confined to an indirect and imperfect analysis of the patient's condition. Be that as it may, and it in fact may be the way it will always be, such professional limitations do not eliminate the structural aspects of cognitive operations nor detract in any way from the accuracy of our description concerning what constitutes its disorder.

The individual strives to order in various ways certain images which conserve and enhance his own being; such a system emerges from the recesses of the inner person—an amalgam of instincts and feelings as well as thoughts—and generally provides the individual with a coherent figural unit of meaning. This paper has suggested that when this imagery becomes a journey without maps, or when no scheme of self-sameness or otherness prevails, such imaginal disruption goes beyond the principle of charity and must be regarded as a condition of mental disorder. Although the current model of psychiatric classification claims to do justice to the complexity of the single case, by focusing almost exclusively on the diagnosis, prognosis and outcome of observed disorders it cuts off communication with the patient and severely blocks accessibility to more foundational problems. As such, it ironically ignores the distinctness of a personal psychological system and the deep and tragic nature of its impairment.

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